

MA THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Public Information Department, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340

PRESS RELEASE

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PRINTS BY TOULOUSE-LAUTREC AND BONNARD
Through March 2, 1986

Lithographs by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) and Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947), chosen from the collections of The Cleveland Museum of Art, are on exhibit at the Museum through March 2, 1986. While working in Paris in the early 1890s, the two artists took up lithography and revitalized this medium with their innovative techniques and their use of bold, simple designs and flat areas of decorative color.

Both artists accepted many commercial art projects, producing posters, illustrations, and prints that would reach a broad audience, and both chose their subjects from everyday life. But while Bonnard depicted Parisians largely in intimate domestic settings or on the boulevards of the city, Toulouse-Lautrec recorded a narrower segment of society--the world of the cabaret, the brothel, and the racetrack.

Toulouse-Lautrec was tremendously impressed by the bold patterns and flowing lines of Bonnard's first color poster, published in 1891, and at Bonnard's instigation began executing the posters for which he in turn became famous. Both men admired Japanese prints and adopted in their own work many of the devices used by Japanese artists: simplification of form, asymmetrical composition, use of figures in close-up profile against flat-colored backgrounds.

The fifty-nine prints by Toulouse-Lautrec reflect the astonishing variety of his output. In addition to the celebrated cafe scenes and the portraits of Parisian entertainers, there are posters, illustrations and covers, and a selection

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2-prints by toulouse-lautrec and bonnard

of prints from Elles, his sympathetic portrayal of the Montmartre prostitutes in their leisure moments--bathing, dressing, doing their hair.

The fourteen lithographs by Bonnard include subjects from his series, Some Scenes of Parisian Life, and an important four-panel screen depicting a scene, composed of four lithographs, of nursemaids and children promenading against a backdrop of horses and carriages. Bonnard's choice of the screen format and his placement of the figures in the composition across the four panels of the screen reveal again his indebtedness to Japanese art. The Museum's screen, which is in excellent condition, was part of an original edition of 110 (many now lost or damaged) and is one of only four in American museums.

Prints by Toulouse-Lautrec and Bonnard was organized by Hilliard T. Goldfarb, who served as an assistant curator in the Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings before his recent appointment as a curator of European art at the Hood Museum, Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. The exhibition was installed under the supervision of Louise S. Richards, chief curator of prints and drawings at The Cleveland Museum of Art.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Information Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.